

## Message Text

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ACTION CPR-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 FCSC-01 H-03 SS-20 L-03 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01

SP-03 A-01 OPR-02 SCI-06 NSC-07 NASA-04 DRC-01 EB-11

TRSE-00 /122 W

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O R 261505Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7022

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 2390

USIA FOR IEE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL

SUBJECT: ASTRONAUT CERNAN VISIT TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA

REF: FERNANDEZ/KINZER PHONE CON, SEPTEMBER 25; PRAGUE 2334

1. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS CERNAN PUZZLEMENT OVER LOW-KEY RECEPTION HERE AND HAS ALREADY ANTICIPATED NEED FOR DETAILED BRIEFING ON RECENT LOCAL EVENTS IMMEDIATELY UPON PRAGUE ARRIVAL.

2. IN VIEW OF QUESTIONS RAISED IN REF PHONE CONVERSATION, HOWEVER, FOLLOWING PRELIMINARY DETAILS ARE OFFERED:

A. US AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAVE BEEN NEGOTIATING SETTLEMENT OF COMPLEX FINANCIAL CLAIMS FROM BOTH SIDES WHICH DATE BACK TO IMMEDIATE POST-WWII PERIOD. SUCH SETTLEMENT WOULD INVOLVE, AMONG MANY OTHER THINGS, RETURN OF 18 METRIC TONS OF GOLD BELONGING TO CZECHS WHICH USG AND ALLIES HAVE HELD FOR QUARTER CENTURY. AGREEMENT WAS TO HAVE BEEN SIGNED BY CZECH FOREIGN MINISTER AND US SECRETARY OF  
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STATE AT CEREMONIES IN WASHINGTON DURING PERIOD WHEN FOREIGN

MINISTER WAS AT CURRENT OPENING OF UNGA. SIGNING WILL NOT TAKE PLACE DUE TO PASSAGE OF RESTRICTING AMENDMENT IN SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE. EVENTUAL OUTCOME IN CONGRESS STILL VERY MUCH IN AIR. CZECH MFA DELEGATION IS IN NEW YORK NOW AND WILL PROBABLY CONFER WITH SECRETARY DURING STAY.

B. BLUNTLY PUT, DEVELOPMENTS HAVE NOT PLEASED CZECHS, WHO SEE THEMSELVES AS HAVING BEEN FORTHCOMING IN COURSE OF NEARLY A YEAR OF INVOLVED NEGOTIATIONS. EMBASSY CAN ONLY ASSURE CERNAN THAT MFA IS NOT UNAWARE OF SYMBOLIC VALUE OF VISIT BY US ASTRONAUT, PARTICULARLY ASTRONAUT WITH FAMILY TIES TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA. BY SAME TOKEN HOWEVER, CLAIMS AGREEMENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PAST TWO WEEKS HAVE AFFECTED MFA RESPONSES RE CERNAN RECEPTION. SITUATION REMAINS IN FLUX AND EMBASSY HAS PRESERVED ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CERNAN PROGRAM. MFA IS NOW RESPONDING, AGAIN, TO REQUESTS FOR DIRECT ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING SUCH ELEMENTS OF CERNAN PROGRAM AS CONTACT WITH LOCAL NATIONAL COMMITTEES (MISTNI NARODNI VYBOR), WHICH IS PREREQUISITE TO ANY CONTACT WITH RELATIVES IN TABOR, BECHYNE OR VYSOKA.

C. EMBASSY HOPES CERNAN UNDERSTANDS ATTEMPT BY EMBASSY TO CONVEY EXPLANATION OF LOCAL BUREAUCRATIC CHANNELS IN NO WAY SHOULD IMPLY EMBASSY SUPPORT OF, OR IDENTIFICATION WITH, THOSE CHANNELS AND THE METHODS INVOLVED. THEY DO, HOWEVER, REPRESENT LOCAL REALITY.

D. CERNAN LOCAL HOST WILL BE CZECHOSLOVAK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES. EMBASSY BELIEVES LOCAL HOST WOULD HAVE BEEN ACADEMY IN ANY CASE, REGARDLESS OF CLAIMS AGREEMENT DIFFICULTIES, BUT ALSO BELIEVES THAT ERA OF GOOD FEELING SURROUNDING SIGNING OF CRUCIAL AGREEMENT WOULD HAVE RAISED PROTOCOL LEVEL OF RECEIPT (\$ 5#-5 28)) ,95 ,92 #-003,. FURTHER, TIME LOST DURING THE LONG PAUSE CONNECTED WITH THE SUDDEN DEVELOPMENT OF DIFFICULTIES IS ONLY NOW BEING SLOWLY REGAINED IN INTENSIVE PHONE CONTACTS BETWEEN MFA AND EMBASSY.

E. IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY UNFORTUNATE IF CERNAN PROGRAM WERE NOW ABRUPTLY TRUNCATED FROM US SIDE, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF CZECH DECISION TO ASSIST DESPITE PERCEIVED INJURY.  
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3. SCHEDULE SUPPLIED IN REFTEL STANDS, WITH FOLLOWING ADJUSTMENTS:  
SEPTEMBER 29 - FULL DAY IN TABOR-BECHYNE AREA. EMBASSY HAS ASSEMBLED PROGRAM INDEPENDENT OF MFA-  
MISTNI NARODNI VYBOR CHANNEL, CERNANA PARTY WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED ON SIGHTSEEING TRIP  
BY CZECH JOURNALIST WHO WITNESSED LAUNCH OF

APOLLO 17, AS WELL AS EMBOFF, LOCAL GUIDE  
AND TRANSLATOR. LOCAL RECEPTION  
DIRECTLY DEPENDS ON MFA ROLE IN PROGRAM.  
EMBASSY HAS PREPARED FOR BOTH EVENTUALITIES.  
MFA PROMOTES RESPONSE NLT SEPTEMBER 28, BUT POSS-  
SIBLY BY SEPTEMBER 27, CERNANA BE ASSURED THAT EMBASSY IS  
CLOSELY ATTENDING TO THIS  
PARTICULAR POINT.

SEPTEMBER 30 - EMBASSY IS AWAITING FINAL CONFIRMATION OF  
FULL-DAY PROGRAM WITH SLOVAK ACADEMY REPRESENTATIVES.  
FUNCTIONAL HOST WILL BE LOCAL  
GEOPHYSICAL INSTITUTE. LECTURE-TALK AND  
DISCUSSION SHOULD FOCUS ON APPOLLO-SOYUZ  
PORGARM.

NOTE: SEPARATION OF CERNAN FROM P&E EXHIBIT  
OPENING IN BRATISLAVA NECESSITATED SHIFT OF  
REPOSIBILITY FOR VISIT TO ANOTHER MINISTRY IN  
BRATISLAVA.

OCTOBER 1 - CERNEN PARTY WILL SPEND FULL DAY AND POSSIBLY  
EARLY EVENING ON VISIT TO VYSOKA NAD KYSUCOU.  
CERNAN RELATIVES' NAMES HAVE BEEN SUPPLIED TO  
MFA FOR INCLUSION IN ARRANGEMENT WITH LOCAL  
AUTHORITIES EMBASSY IS AWAITING MFA RESPONSE.  
CERNAN SHOULD BE AWARE OF SENSITIVE POSITION  
IN WHICH HIS VISIT MAY PLACE HIS RELATIVES,  
AND THE CONCOMITANT ADVISEABILITY OF SCRUPLOUS  
REGULARITY IN THE MEANS THROUGH WHICH THEY ARE  
CONTACTED. HE IS EXTREMELY VISIBLE VISITOR, NONE  
OF WHOSE ACTIVITITES WILL BE CASUALLY TREATED BY  
LOCAL AUTORITIES.

OCTOBER 2 - FOLLOWING EARLY MORNING RETURN TO PRAGUE (IN  
PLACE OF OCTOBER 3 RETURN PROPOSED IN ORGINAL  
SCHEDULE), CERNANA WOULD VISIT INTERNATIONAL  
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SCHOOL OF PRAGUE, 1100 HOURS. EMBASSY IS AWAIT-  
ING DECISION FROM MFA AND UNION OF JOURNALISTS  
ON FORMAL AFTERNOON PRESS CONFERENCE. EMBASSY  
HAS SET UP INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS BY NEWSPAPAER,  
RADIO AND SCIENCE PRESS CONTACTS IN COURSE OF  
AFTERNOON AS SUBSTITUTE FOR PRESS CONFERENCE, AS  
NEEDED.

OCTOBER 3 - ACADEMY OF SCIENCE ASTRONOMICAL INSTITUTE DIRECTOR  
LJUBOMIR PEREK WILL HOST VISIT TO INSTITUTE OB-  
SERVATORY AT ONDREJOV. LECTURE/TALK WITH DIS-  
CUSSION SESSION ON APOLLO-SOYUZ PROGRAM (1000-  
1200 HOURS) WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY LUNCH (1200-  
1500 HOURS PLUS). AUDIENCE FOR TALK WILL BE  
APPROXIMATELY 30 SCIENTISTS CAPABLE OF UNDERSTANDING  
ENGLISH. TRANSLATOR WILL BE USED FOR QUESTIONS

AND ANSWERS IN DISCUSSION PERIOD. EMBASSY PROPOSES  
FLAG PRESENTATION AT LUNCH. MFA CONCURS.  
GUESTS AT COCKTAIL RECEPTION (1800-2000 HOURS) AT  
CHARGE D'AFFAIRES RESIDENCE WILL INCLUDE ACADEMY  
REPRESENTATIVES AND LOCAL PRESS (WITH AMERICANS,  
APPROXIMATELY 80 PERSONS).

4. ATTENUATION CERNAN STAY IN CZECHOSLVAKIA WOULD ENTAIL  
CANCELLATION ALL OCTOBER 3 EVENTS, WHICH COULD NOT BE  
RE-SCHEDULED AT THIS POINT. EMBASSY TRUSTS THIS  
POSSIBILITY WOULD BE STRENUOUSLY AVOIDED BY ALL PARTIES  
CONCERNED, IN VIEW OF EVENTS OF PAST FEW DAYS.

5. ADVISE.  
PERRY

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 26 SEP 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** boyleja  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974PRAGUE02390  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740271-0936  
**From:** PRAGUE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t19740911/aaaaajfz.tel  
**Line Count:** 184  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION CPR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** FERNANDEZ/KINZER PHONE CON, SEPTEMBE, R 25; PRAGUE 2334  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** boyleja  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 17 APR 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <17 APR 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <23-Sep-2002 by boyleja>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ASTRONAUT CERNAN VISIT TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA  
**TAGS:** OVIP, OEXC, CZ  
**To:** BUCHAREST  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005